

ABSTRACT

System and method for providing personal videotelephony in which a plurality of videophones are connected to a communications network that is configured for transmitted video and audio communications. Each of the videophones typically includes a camera, display device, telephone keypad, speaker and microphone all of which are operatively connected. The videophones further include means for selectably receiving and transmitting signals over the communications network, which signals represent images and/or sound, and for selectably displaying the signals representing any received signals representing the images on the display screen, and for playing any received signals representing the sounds on said speaker. Means are also provided for selectably accessing a remote location, such as, but not limited to, another videophone, using information entered or selected by a user of the videophone, and to retrieve the signals representing the images and sounds being transmitted from the remote location. In one or more embodiments the present invention further includes at least one networks operation center to store information related to the operation of the videophones and to facilitate the operation of the videophones.